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SUBJECT: REGIONAL COMMAND EAST--BAMYAN AND BAGHLAN
PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS HOST SECURITY JIRGA TO CONTROL BORDER
VIOLENCE

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¶1. (SBU) Bamyan Provincial Governor Sarabi and Baghlan Provincial Governor Barakzai recently co-hosted a jirga of approximately 50 community leaders from the border region of their two provinces to resolve a range of issues contributing to increasing violence there. Community leaders on both sides of the border want the insurgency stopped and are ready to work with provincial authorities, security organizations, and Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) representatives for this purpose. The jirga was a critical step in resolving security issues in the region before they become widespread. Demonstrating the commitment to this stabilization process, a memorandum of understanding was signed by both governors and ANP, NDS, and PRT representatives focused on security. End summary.

VIOLENCE ALONG THE BAMYAN-BAGHLAN BORDER CONTINUES UNABATED

¶2. (U) The jirga, a decision-making assembly of male elders, was held in Dust-e-Safeed village, Kahmard District, Bamyan Province and followed an Independent Directorate of Local Governance-sponsored gathering in Kabul several months earlier, which Governor Sarabi characterized as a &failure8 because cross-border attacks on Bamyan originating in its northern neighbor, Baghlan, continue unabated. According to Sarabi, for example, part of the Kabul agreement called for establishment of three new checkpoints in Bamyan to reduce the violence*but two of the checkpoints have since been attacked twice each. Principal jirga participants included heads of shuras from the Bamyan districts of Kahmard, Saighan, and Shibar that border Baghlan Province, Bamyan Afghan National Police (ANP) Chief Awaz, Baghlan National Directorate of Security (NDS) Chief Majeed Kkan, Mullahs Hafizullah and Bas Mohammad Khan (Tala-Wa-Barfak District, Baghlan), Mullah Ismail (Du Abe, Bamyan), Malauwi Eid Mohammad (Baghak, Bamyan), and Malauwi Hazardin (Ghandak, Bamyan).

BORDER COMMUNITIES READY TO WORK WITH GIROA

¶3. (U) Community leaders on both sides of the border want the insurgency stopped and are ready to work with provincial authorities, security organizations, and PRTOFFs for this purpose. They realize security is the key to development; at the same time, Afghan security officials emphasize the importance of community cooperation in defeating insurgents and criminals. Small, standing working groups were formed during the jirga comprised of key leaders and government officials from both provinces to find ways to stop the

violence and identify development needs that will enhance stability in the eyes of the border populace.

¶4. (U) Other noteworthy recommendations by jirga participants included:

- Finger pointing is not productive; cross-border communities must communicate and cooperate.
- Shuras should play a stronger role in security because of long-standing community distrust.
- Mullahs and other religious leaders must be active participants in formal leadership structures and in security decisions.
- A professional survey team that is acceptable to all parties should finally resolve festering border disputes.
- More checkpoints should be established and manned jointly by ANP and local residents because the latter know who belongs in the local communities and who does not.
- Criminals must be brought to justice under the formal, not informal, justice system--without being able to bribe their way out of jail as this undermines faith in GIROA.

SUPPORTING KIWI PRT LINES OF EFFORT

¶5. (SBU) In support of the Afghan process above, the local New Zealand PRT will focus on four lines of effort in cooperation with its international community and GIROA partners:

- Key Leader Engagements. PRTOFFs--Kiwi and interagency USG representatives--will visit formal and informal, positive and negative influencers from both sides of the border to explore and shape ideas discussed in the jirga. Influential mullahs, elders, and Community Development Councils will be engaged in the Ghandak Valley, as well as Ish Pesta, Kahmard,

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and Shibar Districts.

- Development. The combination of PRT efforts to build relationships with key leaders in Shibar and eastern Kahmard over the past several months and realization by them that development is progressing in safer areas provides a unique opportunity: for the first time, they are reaching out to GIROA by offering cooperation and security in exchange for development assistance. In response, focus communities will be identified to initiate development using New Zealand's Small Project Funds (SPF) and CERP Quick Impact Project (QIP) funds. Larger, longer term endeavors will likely be identified for additional programming in cooperation with the Afghans.

- Security. The PRT is working closely with the ANP to improve existing security checkpoints and construct new ones in the volatile regions of Ish Pesta and Du Abe, and along the Ghandak Highway in the Shakari Valley. Hardening, weatherization, and new equipment are required. As further commitment to deepening area relationships to enhance security, the PRT is considering establishing a permanent presence in Shibar.

- Rule of law training. In response to multiple requests, training in the basics of rule of law precepts for laymen and religious leaders is being pursued.

COMMENT

¶6. (SBU) The jirga was a critical step in resolving security issues in the region before they become widespread and perhaps have a negative impact on Bamyan's viability as one of the provinces in RC-East nominally being considered for transfer of lead responsibility for security to GIROA, a NATO initiative. Significantly all the important formal and informal leaders of the region participated, including many negative influencers. While there is genuine enthusiasm and

support to move forward with agreed monthly meetings under this traditional governance construct, the situation is fragile. PRTOFFs will work in partnership with GIROA to re-enforce the small success and momentum established via the jirga. End comment.
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